

AGENDA ITEM V A

PROPOSED LETTER OF INTENT

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

Master of Nursing - Nurse Anesthesia CIP Code 51.1604

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Louisiana State University Health Science Center projects the development of a program proposal to offer a Master of Nursing - Nurse Anesthesia program. Currently, the LSUHSC offers six different Master of Nursing (MN) programs.

The Nurse Anesthetist functions as a licensed and qualified anesthesiologist practitioner, primarily in small regional medical centers and rural health clinics. The Health Science Center presents compelling evidence of a severe shortage of anesthesia professionals both statewide and throughout the nation. The shortage in Louisiana has been exacerbated by Xavier University's recent decision to discontinue its nurse anesthetist program, previously the only such program in the State. The projected program would be a three-year course of graduate study for appropriately qualified students who have had previous baccalaureate nurse training.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Appropriateness with Institutional Role, Scope, and Mission

The proposal is appropriate to the LSUHSC's role, scope and mission.

Potential for Unnecessary Program Duplication

No such similar program is currently offered in Louisiana.

Prospects for Funding

The Health Science Center estimates new program costs of approximately \$354,000 in Year 1, \$422,984 in Year 2; \$436,000 in Year 3; and \$429,984 in Year 4; however, it is projected that these new costs will be covered by concomitant increases in student tuition income. The Health Science Center anticipates admitting 40 new students in Years 1, 2, and 3 and maintaining a full compliment of 120 students at any given time thereafter (40 first-year, 40 second-year students, and 40 third-year students). By charging these students the same tuition as that currently required of medical students

(\$4,428 per semester), it is expected that appropriately \$1,063,000 in new tuition revenue will be raised annually by Year 3.

The Health Science Center also indicates that it has applied for a three-year grant through the U.S. HRSA Division of Nursing, requesting approximately \$950,000, to initiate the projected new program. The Center anticipates additional external funding efforts in the future.

Consistency with Desegregation Settlement Agreement

Under the previous Consent Decree, the Board of Regents authorized the establishment of a M.S. program in Nursing at Southern University-Baton Rouge as part of the Intercollegiate Nursing Consortium in southern Louisiana. Recently, as provided by the Desegregation Settlement Agreement, the Regents also approved a new Ph.D. program in Nursing at SUBR, scheduled to begin in Fall, 2001. Neither of these graduate programs in Nursing, however, provide for anesthesia training. Hence, it would appear that desegregation issues are not a relevant factor.

STAFF SUMMARY

The staff concludes that the Letter of Intent for the Master of Nursing - Nurse Anesthesia at the Louisiana State University Health Science Center meets requirements of the **Academic Affairs Policy 2.4 - Letters of Intent for Projected New Academic Programs**; however, the Health Science Center's dependence on student tuition income for primary support of the program is somewhat troubling. First, it has yet to determine whether charging Nurse Anesthesia students the same tuition as that currently required of medical students is appropriate. This situation could be particularly problematic as all other MN students at the LSUHSC are currently charged significantly less tuition than medical students. Second, the projections for numbers of students are quite large. If these student numbers are not realized or if tuition levels are less than proposed, then there may be significant future funding problems without continuing institutional support. On a more positive fiscal note, the Health Science Center has already applied for a sizeable grant through the U.S. HRSA Division of Nursing for program support and has plans for subsequent external grant applications in the future.

The staff notes that if this Letter of Intent is approved, it may be developed into a full proposal which will be further reviewed by external consultants. Once this review process is completed, the staff will summarize its findings and make recommendations to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and to the Board of Regents for final action on program implementation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant approval for the Letter of Intent from the Louisiana State University Health Science Center for the projected Master of Anesthesia Science - Anesthesiologist Assistant program, with the stipulation that the full program proposal shall address the following:

1. *The appropriateness of projected student tuition charges; and*
2. *The need for specific state support, especially if student tuition revenues do not keep pace with program costs and anticipated external support is not forthcoming.*

AGENDA ITEM V B

PROPOSED LETTER OF INTENT

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

Master of Anesthesia Science - Anesthesiologist Assistant CIP Code 51.0899

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Louisiana State University Health Science Center projects the development of a program proposal to offer a Master of Anesthesia Science - Anesthesiologist Assistant program.

The anesthesiologist assistant (AA) functions primarily as a specialty physicians assistant under the direction of a licensed and qualified medical doctor/anesthesiologist, primarily in medical centers. The AA assists the anesthesiologist in developing and implementing a patient's anesthesia care plan. The Health Science Center presents compelling evidence of a severe shortage of anesthesia professionals both statewide and throughout the nation. The shortage in Louisiana has been exacerbated by Xavier University's recent decision to discontinue its nurse anesthetist program, previously the only such program in the State. The projected program would be a two-year course of graduate study for appropriately qualified students who have had previous baccalaureate allied health/nursing/science training.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Appropriateness with Institutional Role, Scope, and Mission

The proposal is appropriate to the LSUHSC's role, scope and mission.

Potential for Unnecessary Program Duplication

No such similar program is currently offered in Louisiana.

Prospects for Funding

The Health Science Center estimates new program costs of approximately \$338,000 per year; however, it is projected that these new costs will be covered by concomitant increases in student tuition income. The Health Science Center anticipates admitting 20 new students each in Years 1 and 2 and maintaining a full complement of 40 students thereafter (20 first-year and 20 second-year students). By charging these students the same tuition as that currently required of medical students (\$4,428 per

semester), it is expected that appropriately \$340,000 in new tuition revenue will be raised annually by Year 2 .

Consistency with Desegregation Settlement Agreement

The Desegregation Settlement Agreement does not provide for the establishment of an MAS in Anesthesiologist Assistant at any predominantly black institution of higher education in Louisiana.

STAFF SUMMARY

The staff concludes that the Letter of Intent for the Master of Anesthesia Science - Anesthesiologist Assistant at the Louisiana State University Health Science Center meets requirements of the **Academic Affairs Policy 2.4 - Letters of Intent for Projected New Academic Programs**; however, the Health Science Center's dependence on student tuition income for sole support of the program is somewhat troubling. First, it has yet to determine whether charging anesthesiologist assistant students the same tuition as that currently required of medical students is appropriate. Second, there may be significant future funding problems if program costs mount without the implementation of timely increases in student tuition rates to absorb any additional costs. As only the Legislature currently has the authority to increase student tuition rates, a fiscal crisis could quickly arise without some assurance of continuing institutional support. Third, since this is a graduate-level program, it is not unreasonable to expect that some program costs will be covered through external funding (grants, services, and other self-generated revenues).

The staff notes that if this Letter of Intent is approved, it may be developed into a full proposal which will be further reviewed by external consultants. Once this review process is completed, the staff will summarize its findings and make recommendations to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and to the Board of Regents for final action on program implementation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant approval for the Letter of Intent from the Louisiana State University Health Science Center for the projected Master of Anesthesia Science - Anesthesiologist Assistant program, with the stipulation that the full program proposal shall address the following:

3. *The appropriateness of projected student tuition charges;*
4. *The need for specific state support, especially if student tuition revenues do not keep pace with program costs; and*
5. *The amount of external support (grants, services, and other self-generated revenues) that should be included in the proposed program budget.*